

College of Micronesia-FSM

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Keeping Things Simple



Linda Suskie

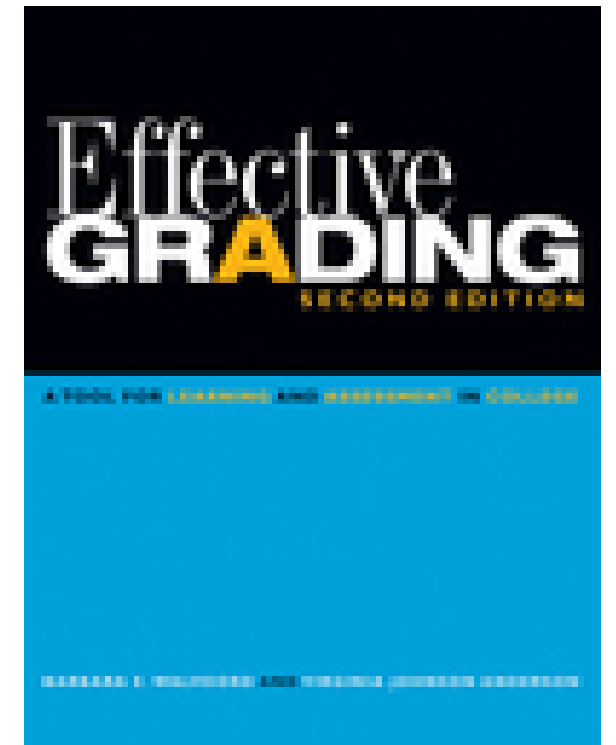
Assessment & Accreditation Consultant

<http://LindaSuskie.com>

Linda@LindaSuskie.com

A Great Resource!

- *Effective Grading: A Tool for Learning and Assessment* (2nd ed.)
 - *Barbara Walvoord & Virginia Anderson*
 - *Jossey-Bass (2009)*



Conduct only assessments
that will help make better decisions.



Form Follows Function

- Why are you assessing student learning?
- How do you want to use student learning evidence?
- What decisions will student learning evidence inform?
- Who will make those decisions?
- What student learning evidence do you need for those people to make those decisions?

- How will results be used?
 - *Give students a great education*
 - *Stewardship*
 - Use results to make better decisions on how resources are used.
 - Deploy resources where they do the most good.
 - *Accountability*
 - Show those investing in us that their money is well spent.
- Who will use results to make better decisions?
 - *Faculty & staff*
 - *Institutional leaders including board*
 - *Marketing*
 - *Development/fund-raising*
 - *Accreditors*
 - *NOT the assessment committee*

Assess only what's most important.



Focus on what impacts the most students.



“80-20 rule” (Pareto Principle)

Improving big, important disappointments in student learning

Don't reinvent the wheel.



Keep a log of time spent assessing.



- How much time do you spend grading each assignment?
 - *How much time do students spend preparing it?*
 - *How much do they learn from it?*
- Balance of time and importance?


Have reasonable expectations
for assessment quality.




- If it's good enough to be used, it's good enough!
- Include “direct” evidence: what a critic couldn't argue with

Direct	Indirect
Student work assessed with rubrics	Grades
Tests	Student self-ratings and surveys
Field experience supervisor evaluations	Student satisfaction
Student reflective writing, assessed qualitatively	Retention, graduation, and placement rates

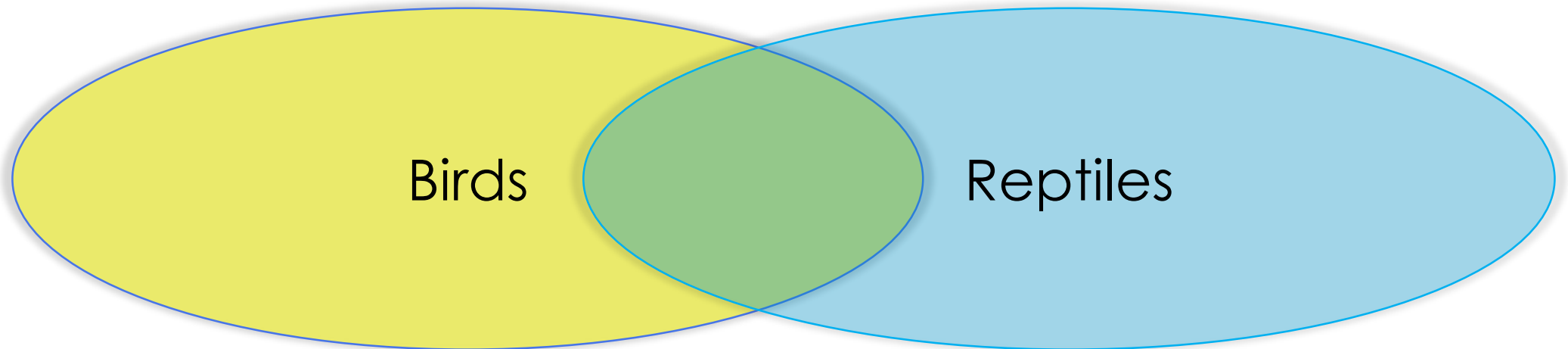
Start at the end and work backwards.

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- Program capstone requirements
 - *Senior or graduate thesis*
 - *Research project*
 - *Field experience*
 - *Comprehensive exam*

Limit the volume of assessment information.

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- Shorter assignments, rubrics, & surveys
 - Group projects & presentations
 - Visual alternatives to writing

Use Venn diagrams to frame compare/contrast.



--Virginia Anderson

Use assessments that do double- or triple-duty.



- “Embedded” assignments that
 - *are used for both grading and assessment*
 - *assess both course and program learning outcomes*
 - *assess multiple program or gen ed learning outcomes*

'A' work is faster and easier to assess
than 'C' or 'D' work.



Establish gateway criteria.



- Do not waste time on careless student work.

- *Walvoord & Anderson*

	A	B	C	F
Purpose & audience	X			
Central idea & overall organization		X		
Paragraph structure	X			
Content/reasoning			X	
Sentence structure			X	
Tone & word choice		X		
Conciseness	X			
Grammar/mechanics				X

Get students involved.



Self checklist

Peer review or checklist

- Where do you waste time grading?
- Peer reviews:
 - *Are the tables easy to understand? How are they unclear?*
 - *How well is the conclusion supported by evidence?*
 - *List the 3 most important steps the author should take to complete the assignment.*
- *Mark Curchack, in Walvoord & Anderson*

Grade minor assignments simply.



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...or spot-check a sample

Focus your feedback.



- Many students don't read comments.
- Rubrics save time writing comments.
- Mark/comment only on major issues.
- Grading is not editing.
 - *Richard Haswell's "Minimal Marking"*

Multiple choice tests
are faster to grade.



Why Use Multiple Choice?

- Options can help diagnose problem areas
- Application
 - *Identify correct application or example*
- Analysis
 - *Identify correct cause, effect, or element*
 - *Identify why something occurs or is best*

Start with a Test Blueprint

- Give it to students as a study guide.



Writing Effective Multiple Choice Questions

1. Remove all **barriers** that will keep a knowledgeable student from getting the item right.
2. Remove all **clues** that will help a less-than-knowledgeable student get the item right.

A Few Tips...

- The “stem” should ask a complete question.
- Keep items short and concise.
- Don’t make vocabulary unnecessarily difficult.
- Order responses logically.
- Keep options the same length.
- Avoid “all of the above” and “none of the above.”
- Avoid grammatical clues and interlocking items.

Reflective writing is an easy way
to assess attitudes & values.



Reflection on What, Why, and How One Has Learned

- What did you try to learn in this activity or assignment?
- What problems did you encounter in this activity or assignment? How did you solve them?
- If you could start over, what would you do differently?
- What suggestions would you give other students on ways to get the most out of this activity or assignment?

Eliciting Honest Reflections

- Ask about both positives and negatives.
- Avoid questions that students are uncomfortable answering honestly.
- Phrase questions to elicit thoughtful replies.
- If appropriate, let students admit they don't know or can't remember.
- Grade reflective writing by effort or reasoning, not content.

Time to Reflect!



Time to Talk!

- Self-Appraisal Exercises 1-3
- Self-Appraisal Exercises 4-5